

Helping People Find a Home of Their Own

Jubilee Launches Housing Support Services

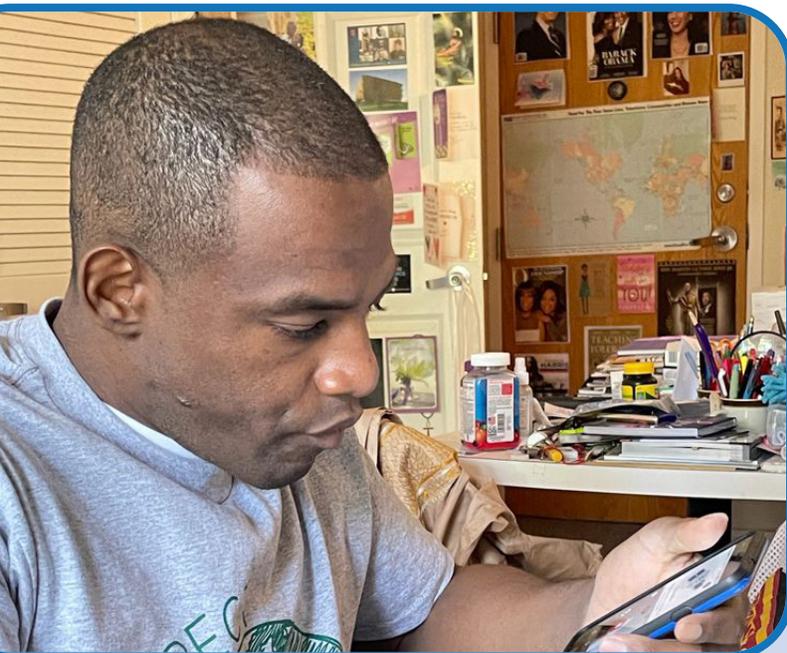
"When I worked alone to get my son Kobi a housing voucher it was very stressful. You're making decisions that impact your adult child's future," said parent James Cudjoe.

Today, Jubilee is working to ensure that families like the Cudjoes are not alone. Jubilee is now launching a new Housing Support Services division. **We will help adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) find and secure their own affordable housing.** This work is alongside our core service of Residential Support Services.

A national study found that an eye-opening 79 percent of people with I/DD say their top goal is to have a home of their own.

"Now Jubilee will be able to help more people achieve their goal of independent living," said Executive Director Steve Keener.

Finding and securing an affordable home is only one part of the housing process. Jubilee often hears that the people we support want to live on their own. Yet when the time comes, many people become fearful and cancel their plans to live on their own.



At his own home Kobi exercises with his brother-in-law, plays game shows with his roommate, and bakes muffins with his Jubilee direct support staff Maxine.



Kobi has a government housing voucher that his father James secured for him, and affordable rent thanks to a Jubilee housing partnership.

Jubilee will provide guidance on owning or renting a home. We'll discuss how to handle relationships with roommates, neighbors, and landlords. Budgeting, home maintenance and renter rights and responsibilities are also topics.

Francess Issa, Jubilee's new Housing Support Services manager, shares that "the goal is to ensure that people make the move with confidence and excitement about their future."

An important change at the Maryland Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) makes this new work possible. For the first time, DDA will pay service providers for housing support as they do for residential support.

"It would have been a huge benefit to have had help through the process and get advice," said James.

The cost to launch Housing Support Services is not a DDA covered expense. "We estimate the launch cost at Jubilee to be \$100,000," says Steve Keener. **"Supporting people where they want to live has long been a Jubilee priority. This is the next evolution of our housing work."**

Max's Path to Independent Living

As told by Max Poznerzon

I was born in Germany in 1948, and I was a "blue baby". I needed oxygen. The hospital didn't give it to me. It caused permanent brain damage. And mental health issues.

My Dad was a Holocaust survivor. He had a lot of pain and anger from that time. We moved to America for a better life when I was a kid. It wasn't easy being me when I was young.

After high school I lived in an institution for a while. My family came to visit me. They saw right away that the place I was staying was giving me way too much medicine. I hated it there, and I couldn't function. My family brought me home. My parents and my sister Deborah always looked out for me. I worked as a handyman helper on the family properties. I'm great with animals, and I took care of our pets too.

I wanted to have more independence. I got my driver's license, and I was really proud. **I thought about what I truly wanted, and that was to live on my own with my best friend Curtis.**

I met Curtis through our friend Pat when I was in my 30s. She was working with a social skills club, and we all became friends. I even drove my friends all the way to Ocean City.

Pat worked at Jubilee. They helped me get government funding for residential services. Jubilee helped Curtis and me find a place of our own. **I really liked that Jubilee worked hard to get us a place to live together, because that's what I wanted.** We've lived together for decades. Would you believe I've been with Jubilee for 34 years.



Kate Whitmore and Max move to their own apartment.

A lot has changed over the years. I even got married! I met my beautiful Kate, and we fell in love. In 2009, we had a commitment ceremony. Kate lives with me and Curtis. Our friend Jordan lives with us too, and so does Margie from Jubilee. She helps us a lot with our day-to-day needs.

Kate and I just took our next big step together. **We moved out of our longtime Jubilee group home, and into an apartment.** Just us! It's a little scary, but it's also exciting. Our Jubilee counselor Margie moved with us, and she's helping us get used to our new place. Our new building has a big common space for activities, and free outdoor concerts nearby in the Rockville Town Center. We go to the park nearby. I like to grill dinner for us, especially steaks and shrimp.

I'm 73 years young, and this feisty old dog is still trying new things.

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We're so grateful to our new charitable partner, the KTown Ladies! Their members select Jubilee as their charity of choice on AmazonSmile.

Thank you for supporting our work.

Jubilee Association of Maryland

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